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ABSTRACT

A Family Story Curriculum Project was implemented in three English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classes at the Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) center in Seattle, Washington. This project followed a successful storytelling project in which students remembered and told folktales from their native countries. The purposes of the Family Story curriculum were varied: to increase self-esteem, cultural adjustment, and language skills of the participants; to create student-generated materials that address family issues and bridge the cultural and generational gap between newcomers and their American-raised children; to print 5 to 10 stories for classroom use; and to train ReWA instructional staff in collecting and using family stories. All goals were easily met, with 17 ReWA staff trained and more than 24 stories printed. Curriculum materials and a description of the project were also developed. This document contains the following sections: (1) Training: Oral History and Journal Writing; (2) Pre-Collection Activities; (3) Collecting Stories; (4) Follow-up ESL Activities; and (5) Conclusion (including two major concerns that arose during the course of the project--the need for more ESL activities and management of the grief and sadness that accompanied student memories). Sample student illustrations are included. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education) (LB)

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REFUGEE WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

FAMILY STORY CURRICULUM PROJECT

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1991
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Introduction to the Refugee Women's Alliance Family Story Curriculum Project

In the spring of 1991, The Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA), a non-profit organization with the mission of helping refugee women achieve self-sufficiency in America, implemented a Family Story Curriculum Project in three ESL classes in their center in Seattle, Washington. This project followed the development of an extremely successful storytelling project in 1990 in which students remembered and told folktales from their native countries. It was clear that the ReWA students had yet more to say about their own personal stories. These personal stories often emerge in ESL classrooms. We wanted to encourage their emergence and hoped that focusing on them would signal to students that these memories and experiences have value. Everyone has stories. Everyone has a past. Sharing our past is a way to communicate in the present. For refugees, remembrances of the past may be particularly bittersweet. Some of the stories shared were funny and caused much laughter. Others, amusing or not, were more deeply felt: stories about family members left behind alive or dead, childhood memories of playmates and caregivers, and of a life that now seems long ago and far away.

Our purposes were to develop a Family Story curriculum to use in ESL classes in order to increase self-esteem, cultural adjustment, and language skills of the participants, to create student generated materials that address family issues and bridge the cultural and generational gap between newcomers and their American raised children, to print five to ten stories for classroom use, and to train ReWA instructional staff in collecting and using Family Stories. All goals were easily met. Seventeen ReWA staff members received training and worked to implement the project, over two dozen stories were printed in a book which was given to each student and many more were collected. Curriculum materials as well as a description of the project were developed. The new materials helped to bridge the cultural and generational gaps and raise the skill level and self-esteem of both staff and students.

DEVELOPING FAMILY STORIES WITH REFUGEE WOMEN

Section I: Training: Oral History and Journal Writing

In the past, ReWA has found using experts and practitioners from various fields a very effective form of staff training. The value of this type of staff development can not be underestimated. Experts and practitioners from the field present material from first hand experience, have a wealth of stories and examples, bring new ideas and points of view to the staff, and convey a sense of enthusiasm for the project. To begin this project, ReWA invited Dorothy Cordova, a local Filipina oral historian, to discuss her extensive work with journal writing and oral history collection. The ReWA staff, which included bilingual assistants, ESL instructors, parent educators, volunteers, and childcare workers, came away from the workshop with a greater awareness of their own family stories, a better understanding of the complexities of oral history collection, and a variety of skills and techniques to use in their classes. Perhaps most importantly, they left the workshop brimming with ideas and enthusiasm for the project.

Since 1974, Dorothy Cordova has been gathering the history of Filipinos in the United States. During this time, she has used several methods - archival and library searches, collection of old photographs, oral history interviews and journal writing workshops. Through the Demonstration Project for Asian Americans, she has collected over 253 oral histories, over 2,000 photographs, numerous articles, and 82 mini-journals of individuals. She has found that the most effective way to retrieve personal histories has been oral history interviews and journal writing workshops. Although the outcome is similar with oral history interviews and journal writing, the methods used and the amount of work entailed to finish the task are different. Oral history interviews take much longer but leave an in-depth, broad based, audio and written record. Journal writing gives instant, more focused written information. Oral histories are life stories and/or experiences of ordinary people recorded and preserved on tape. They are reminisces about which the narrator speaks from first hand knowledge. Collecting oral histories is time consuming and technically complex. Interviews must be recorded, transcribed, checked, and often translated. Journals are the account of day-to-day events. Journal writing is the recording of an individual's ideas and

recollections of certain events or a certain time in his/her life.

For the purposes of the ReWA Family Stories Project, Cordova suggested using both oral history interviews and journal writing workshops to build a more comprehensive base of information. We did not attempt to record full oral histories. Students were encouraged to tell or tape record their stories first and write about them afterwards. The stories were short accounts of day-to-day events from a certain time in the students' lives rather than long, narrative, historical accounts.

In the training, Cordova presented an effective journal writing activity that can easily be used in an ESL setting. By participating in this activity, staff experienced an essential part of family story collection: the process of evoking memories. Many memories arose and were shared among the group. This gave the staff a sense of how journal writing might be experienced by students in their classes. Because it was so effective, we have included it here.

Journal Writing Activity

Instructions:

* There are no mistakes.
* Fill your writing with free, flowing thoughts.
* You are writing "bits and pieces" of yourself.
* Journal writing is a method of talking to yourself.
* Your journal does not have to be a finished product.

Format:

* Have refreshments available.
* Introduce participants to each other.
* Explain project and give instructions.
* Warm-up exercise: Give participants a subject - e.g. kitchen.
* For five minutes write single word images that word brings to mind.
* Read back what has been written. Take turns.
* For ten minutes - in phrases or sentences - write emotions the subject (kitchen) conjures up.
* Read back. Take turns.
* For twenty minutes, write a paragraph on another subject (see list of topics below).
* Read back.

Depending on the number of participants, it may take more than two hours for one subject to be covered fully. However, it is possible to cover a single topic in an hour.

Suggested Topics:

* school
* holidays
* punishment
* playing
* marriage

After Cordova's workshop, we met with the instructional staff to determine how to best implement this project. Three classes were selected for the project: 1) a Pre-Literate class; 2) an Evenstart class; and 3) a Family Talk Time class. We quickly discovered that there were too many ideas and too little time. It was decided that each of the three classes would implement the project in different ways due to the uniqueness of each class and because the staff, following Cordova's training, had enthusiastically developed curriculum ideas specific to their own class. With different issues and activities in mind for each class, a common outline was agreed upon. Each class would define a topic area, use pre-story collecting activities, tell as well as write stories, and do follow up ESL exercises. An observer attended each class to record how the project was implemented and to document use of bilingual assistants, story recording methods, and warm-up and follow-up activities.

1. The Pre-Literate Class

The Pre-Literate class was our lowest level class. It had 25 students and one instructor with minimal bilingual assistance. Due to limited time and bilingual resources, the instructor of this class focused on activities describing students' families. They described families using rods and drew pictures of their families. Some of the drawings are reproduced here. The students were able to describe the drawings and their families using simple adjectives (big, small. etc.) and family labels (mother, father, etc.). (See Pre-Lit Drawings)

2. The Evenstart Class

The Evenstart class was a multi-level family literacy class with two instructors and three bilingual assistants. They had previously used stories in class. The instructors in this class had difficulty agreeing on a topic. One preferred to focus on happy and sad memories of childhood and the other preferred less emotional topics. As it turned out they did some of each. In this class, as in others, instructors enthusiastically tried many topics without necessarily following one through each of the steps outlined above. This

was due to several factors. First, the wealth of ideas stemming from the training workshop made it difficult to narrow it down to using just a few. Second, there were differing ideas about which topics were most appropriate for each class. Finally, because the project was implemented before curriculum materials were fully developed, the instructors did not have access to them.

The Evenstart class used a variety of collection activities including teacher stories, brainstorming, story quilts, journal writing, and drawing. The class used the theme of happy and sad feelings from childhood. First, they brainstormed happy and sad feelings. Then students chose either a happy or a sad feeling from their own childhood and drew a picture of this feeling. The student then told a small group about their picture. Students used some bilingual help at this point. Some told about the picture in native language and some asked for help only with specific words. The bilingual staff tried to balance getting the students to use English and expressing their feelings. The students then worked with the bilingual staff to practice telling the story in English. Then they individually tape recorded their stories. The tape recording proved difficult for students. They were afraid of the tape recorder and embarrassed about recording mistakes. Finally, they wrote the stories. Some students wrote by themselves, asking for assistance from bilingual staff and instructors when needed. (see Loi's story)

3. The Family Talk Time Class

In the Family Talk Time class, five volunteer teachers agreed to cover four broad areas of story topics. The topics were: childhood games, the house where you grew up, memories of grandparents (or other inter-generational stories), and celebrations in students' native countries. The methods used to collect stories from Family Talk Time students included many of the strategies used in the other classes as well as activities for more advanced students such as journal writing and taped stories. The class began by using student drawn pictures with short descriptions. The next step was an LEA writing exercise in which one student was the storyteller and the other students helped by prompting the storyteller with questions. Finally, near the end of the project, the students wrote their own stories in journals (see Veth's Story) or met with a teacher individually and taped their stories. In retrospect, all classes wanted more time and more specific ideas to move past the recording of stories and into using them for ESL activities.

Another issue that emerged during the project was how to get students past very brief description and into the real telling of their past experiences. Dorothy Cordova suggests the following questions to elicit longer responses during the course of a conversation. Depending on the level of the students, these or other opening and follow-up questions could be introduced and practiced before students tell their stories. Students could then add to their stories with the help of questions from their classmates.

Opening and Follow-up Questions:

"Briefly describe ..."
"Let's talk about ..."
"Let's get back to ..."
"We were talking about ..."
"Anything you would like to say about ...?"
"You already touched on it a bit, but let's go back ..."
"We were talking about ..."
"Has there been much change ..."
"How much ..."
"How little ..."
"What do you think of ...?"
"What was your role ...?"
"Tell about ..."
"Want to explain that part a little more?"

Cordova also stressed the importance of getting participants' consent when working on any oral history or family stories project. Two sample consent forms are shown below.

FILIPINO AMERICAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Release Form

Interviewee's Name:
Interviewer's Name:
This interview, recorded or otherwise, and any subsequent ones I make for this project may be used by interested researchers. Individuals and institutions may obtain a copy. Subject to any terms stated below, my interview(s) may be used for research, instruction, publication and similar purposes. In order to encourage full utilization of my interview(s) I dedicated literary rights in this information to the Filipino American National Historical Society.

Special Conditions:

Content of Tapes:

Number of Tapes:

Interviewee's Signature: _____ Date: _____
Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____

Interviewer's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Refugee Women's Alliance
Release Form

Student's Name: _____

I give my permission to allow my story to be printed, copied and distributed as a collection. I understand that the story may be used by the Refugee Women's Alliance for educational and promotional purposes.

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Teacher's Signature: _____

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Section II: Pre-Collection Activities

1. SPEAKERS: Given your student population, think about the kinds of speakers who might provide useful information and be role models for your students. For example, if the students are refugee women, then have refugee women who have been in the U.S. for some time come in and present their life stories to the students. Have students take notes and get basic information (i.e., dates, facts, how many people in family, country of origin, how reached the U.S., what happened once they arrived in the U.S., what they are doing now). Following the presentation, have students share their notes, review

together, draw an outline or timeline of the speaker's experiences, or ask questions about the speaker's experience.

This activity provides students with good listening skills practice, a model for telling their own stories, and an opportunity to hear from refugee women who have been in the U.S. longer than they have. It also sets the stage for comparison and contrast: how was this woman's experience similar to each student's? How was it different? What events would students like to include in their own stories? What do they want others to know about their experiences?

2. **TIMELINES:** Have students make their own timelines. Brainstorm events: birth, childhood events, adolescence, marriage, deaths, work, holidays, or becoming a parent. Focusing on specific events may elicit clearer recollections. For example:
- Where were you when you first found out you would be coming to the U.S.?
- Describe the birth of your first child.
- What did you wear on your wedding day?
- What did you eat on special holidays?

3. **EVERYDAY STORIES:** Talk about what your students did yesterday or what they do every day. Make the point that we are always telling stories. Ask what they talk about with friends and family. Often, daily conversation brings up stories about something that happened to us or to those around us. Give examples: In December, there was a surprise snow storm in Seattle. For days afterwards people asked each other, "Where were you when the snow first fell in Seattle?" Everyone had a story to tell.

4. **MUSIC:** Turn the lights out. Play music from different cultures. How does each type of music make students feel? How can they describe it? What did they think about during the music? Jot down individually or discuss first with a partner and then as a whole group.

5. **SAMPLE STORIES:** Use examples from your own experience. One teacher at ReWA told the following short story about her mother and grandmother.

> My grandmother grew up in Vietnam and moved to France in about 1955. I didn't see her very often because she lived so far away. When she came to visit us in the United States, she gave us money and presents. She and my mom didn't get along very well. When she came to our apartment, she hid notes all over. The notes said, "Clean up this drawer," or "You are too disorganized." My mother would laugh and throw the notes away.

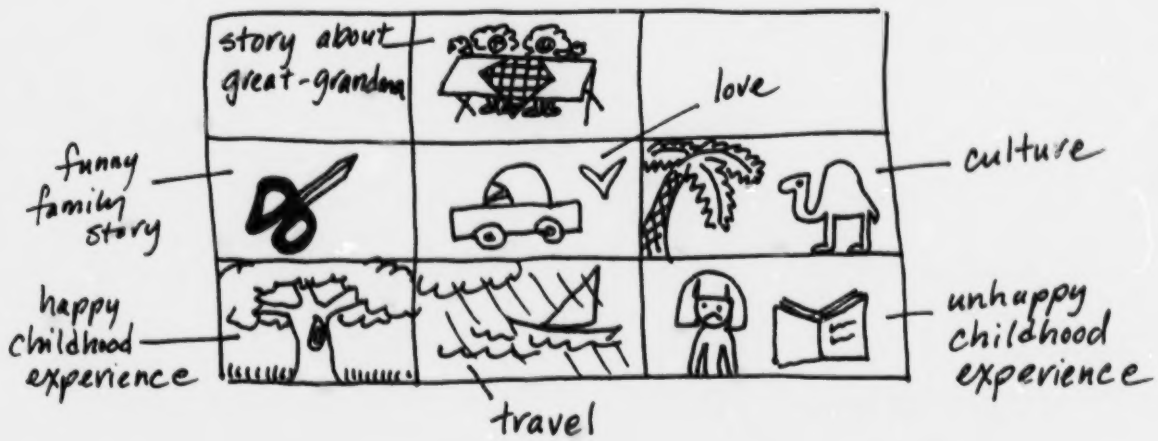
After hearing this story, students talked about the tension between the mother and grandmother. Reaction to the story was strong and animated as students discussed why this tension existed. It is important to note that family stories and oral histories may include all kinds of stories. Teachers may want to introduce the subject by sharing several different kinds of personal stories - happy, sad, difficult, ordinary, funny, tragic, etc. In the sample story above, students found they could relate to the fact that the mother and grandmother did not get along well. Another story made everyone laugh, and one, about being teased, made some students remember how they felt when they had been teased. Varying the stories enhances the likelihood of students remembering something from their own experiences. It also provides students with more options. They may choose to tell or write about whatever memories or events they are comfortable sharing.

Introduce the story with a picture or pictures. Ask questions first. What do you see? What words do you expect to hear in the story? What do you expect the story to be about? Then read the story aloud. Discuss vocabulary and content. Have students read silently and aloud.

6. **WORD ASSOCIATION:** For vocabulary introduction and practice and for brainstorming new topics for oral histories, try word associations. For example:
hot-cold
green-trees
rice-bread
house-shade
grandmother-kind

7. **JOURNAL WRITING:** See Section I for specific activity and instructions.

8. **STORY QUILT:** The story quilt, an activity first introduced at ReWA by Cathy Spagnoli, a Seattle-based professional storyteller, can be used in several ways. To introduce the wide variety of topics that can be included in life stories, the instructor may want to make her own story quilt. This can be done with drawings. On a sheet of paper (the larger the sheet, the more space for more stories), section off squares. In each square, draw something that reminds you of a certain story. Remember to vary the theme of the stories. A sample is drawn below. The themes are written for the purposes of clarification here.



Try telling some of the stories from your own story quilt in class. Then, brainstorm with students the kinds of stories we can tell. A partial list might look like this:

- happy
- sad
- funny
- love
- family / childhood
- ordinary
- adventure
- mistake
- animal
- story with a moral
- scary
- important events
- folk tale
- hero/heroine
- embarrassing

Story quilts may also be used to narrow a topic. For example, with the topic of "childhood memories," here is what you might get by brainstorming different types of stories related to childhood memories:

- funny stories
- sad stories
- special moments
- special people
- helping cook/sew/work/fix things/fish/farm
- celebrations
- funerals/deaths
- punishment
- fears/nightmares
- tricking others/being tricked
- weddings
- songs
- being embarrassed
- doing something you're not supposed to do
- health/sickness
- stories of exaggeration
- travel
- caregivers
- learning things
- games

While this long list provides students with lots of possibilities, it will need to be narrowed down. Following up on the example of childhood memories, the class might choose to focus on special people. The outline for a story quilt might then look like this:

a special friend	a special relative
a special neighbor	a special person who taught you something

Once the outline for the story quilts are made, have students draw a picture related to each theme in the boxes. In pairs or small groups have students tell the story they have drawn. Often, the telling at this point is more of a description of the things they have drawn. Encourage students to ask questions of each other to get beyond description.

Story quilts are recommended to encourage students to think of specific events, feelings, or people. It is difficult for many of us to come up with a story unless something stirs our memory. Story quilts are meant to do just this.

9. OTHER STORIES AND BOOKS: Talk about stories and storytellers in the students native countries. Bring in samples of books. Look at covers (only!). Have students guess what kind of story the book is about. Use brainstorming list from story quilts (above) for ideas. Brainstorm other kinds of stories. The challenge is to present students with enough material (timelines, personal stories, story quilts, drawings, storybooks, etc.) to evoke strong memories. As storyteller Cathy Spagnoli says, "Stories spawn stories!"

10. OTHER WAYS TO ACTIVATE MEMORY AND INCORPORATE LANGUAGE PRACTICE:

a. Realia and hands on activities: If you're going to discuss houses, bring in construction paper, playdough, twigs, tape, scissors, and make your childhood house! Discuss: how many windows, doors? How many rooms? Where did you eat? Sleep? Work? Who built the house? What was it built out of? Make a town or village. Follow-up by asking about specific things that students remember about housebuilding, about what went on in a certain room, about where people gathered, etc. Move from description to stories.

b. Use cuisinaire rods for making structures and representing people. Tell a story using the rods as props.

c. Think of one recipe you want your children to remember. What is it? How do you make it? Why do you want them to remember it?

Section III: Collecting Stories:

It is helpful to set some parameters for story collection. First, the field of possible topics for classroom purposes must be narrowed. Some of the pre-collection activities such as story quilts and the journal writing activity are helpful for this. Next, decide if the students will tell or write the story first. Especially with lower level students, we found oral work before written work to be essential. Use of translation must also be considered. We found that translation was helpful. Sometimes the bilingual staff and student talked through a story in the student's native language before it was told in English. Other times, they helped only with specific words or structures. It was also useful to have the bilingual staff assist in writing the stories as dictated by the students or assist with spelling. The students in our classes preferred to use as much English as they could and relied on the bilingual staff only as needed for assistance. Finally, decide whether stories will be individual or group endeavors. In our upper level class group stories were popular. One student or the teacher would write what students dictated to create one group story. Whether the stories are individual or group efforts, thought must be given to how the stories will be collected: will they be dictated, recorded, or written directly by the students?. All of these methods can be used in a Family Stories Project. Instructors must decide on their approach before beginning to collect the stories.

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Section IV: Follow-up ESL activities:

The importance of relating the collection of oral histories to language practice for ESL students should be emphasized. There was a tendency, perhaps due to time constraints and lack of curriculum materials, for the instructors to stop after the stories were collected. Both students and instructors thought it would be more productive to use the stories for classroom language practice. Students have stories to share and are willing to share them, but they also have a strong motivation to learn English and need to practice what they are learning. In fact, ReWA students were more concerned about practicing English than telling their stories. In cases where there was not enough pre- and post-language practice, the students were dissatisfied. They did not view the telling of the story or the writing of it as a goal in itself. They were consistently more enthused about practicing English than recording stories. It is important to remember that using student generated materials increases

student involvement and understanding but that generating the materials is only part of the process.

While it is true that students need opportunities to repeat new structures or vocabulary, repetition without variety is fatiguing for the students. In any one lesson, vary the ESL activities. Mix individual activities with pair work and whole group work. Using TPR or a modification of it, get students moving or have them manipulate vocabulary cards, sentence strips, playdough, rods, and whatever realia can be brought into the classroom. Finally, encourage students to interact and help each other. In low-level multi-ethnic classrooms with or without bilingual aids, this may be difficult because students are very limited in what they can say in English. The tendency to group according to first language background is understandable. Nevertheless, the process of negotiation and clarification for meaning between two students and among the entire class are realistic activities and useful skills to develop. Gaining experience in negotiating for meaning in the classroom will provide students with the confidence to make more attempts at communication outside the classroom.

Within each class, several levels of English fluency were represented. The continual challenge for ESL instructors is to meet the needs of varied students in the same class. Whenever possible, keep in mind which students might work well together based on their ESL needs. While the activities listed below are based on the work of two students, other students in the classes could benefit from the same activities. Unless the instructor is able to individualize all follow-up activities, consideration must be given to designing follow-up activities that meet the needs of several students and focus on the most salient ESL needs.

Listed below are suggestions for ESL activities to use after oral histories have been collected. How these activities might be used will vary according to the level of the students and the oral histories they develop. Because of the variety of applications of these activities, examples from two ReWA students will be used. One from the Evenstart Class, **Loi's Story**. with the focus of happy and sad experiences in childhood and one from the family talk time class, **Veth's Story**, with the focus of memories of the household where you grew up.

Possible activities:

- opposites
- compound words
- grammar
- comprehension check
- discussion questions
- numbers, math story problems
- old sayings, morals, remedies
- word search
- meanings of names
- crossword puzzle
- vocabulary practice
- sentence strip
- word search
- concentration
- TPR
- words and their definitions
- sequencing the story and retelling
- embellishing the story
- reading each others stories
- rewriting stories
- correcting stories
- using descriptive words

.....

EvenStart Class:

Loi's Story by Loi Thi Le, written by Loi with spelling assistance from the instructor.

> When I small, my habit is always cry when I don't know now. Where is my mother go?
>
> When I small my mother go away. I not happy. I sad. I cry. I want stay for mother. I don't have any brother or sister. I cry now because I miss my mother.

The purpose of the ESL follow-up activities is to provide students with language practice that meets their language needs. Comprehension exercises would use vocabulary from the story, but other exercises need not be limited to that. The follow-up exercises could provide practice with grammatical structures needed for enhanced communication.

ESL exercises using Loi's story:

A. Comprehension Check

1. What was Loi's habit when she was young and didn't know anything?
2. When did her mother go away?
3. Was Loi happy when her mother went away?
4. What did she want her mother to do?
5. Does she have any brothers or sisters?
6. Why does she cry now?

B. Personalize

1. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
2. When you were small, what made you cry?
3. What makes you cry now?
4. What do you do when you miss someone?

C. Comparison

1. Do your children cry when you leave?
2. What do you say when your children are sad?
3. Is it the same for your children as it was for you?

D. Language Practice

1. Phrase: When I was small...

- Practice similar phrases to expand on this structure:

When I was young, when I was seven, when I was in Laos.

Make sentences using each of those phrases.

- Follow-up with sentence-half strips and have students match the two halves:

When I was small, I wanted to be with my mother all the time.
When I was young, I cried when I fell down.
When I was seven, I played with my best friend.
When I was in Laos, I lived with my grandmother and grandfather.

2. Simple Past Tense

- Practice with verbs from the story - to be, cry, want, go, do, miss. Verbs that come up in exercise 1, above, could also be used - play, live.

- Write present and past tenses of the chosen verbs on separate cards. Give one card to each student. Have students find their verb partner and make two sentences using the verb - one for present and one for past.

- Play concentration with the cards (in small groups). Have students make a sentence each time they turn over a card.

- Write a new story on the blackboard using the verbs and possibly, the sentences from exercise 1. Have one student say a verb in the story and have another student circle it on the blackboard.

- Write the verbs on the blackboard and have students in pairs write stories about each other using those verbs.

3. Another grammatical point to work on or consider for use in the future (depending on student language needs) is the form:

I want _____ to _____.
I want my mother to stay with me.
I want my son to be good.
I want my sister to come to Seattle.

- Model this structure by saying several examples and writing them on the board. Brainstorm other possible sentences and write them on the board. Have students say sentences of their choice aloud.

4. This story could lead into a discussion about habits. What are good and bad habits for children, for adults, for students? Pursue the topic of habits in whatever way is meaningful to your students. This could be done by providing a mixed list of good and bad habits. Have students in pairs decide which are good habits and which are bad. Encourage them to explain why. Share results with the class. Or have students brainstorm good and bad habits. Either way, the grammatical structures in exercises 1 and 2 could be practiced again.

When I was young, I _____ (bad habit?)
I want my children to _____ (good habit).

.....

Family Talk Time Class:

Veth's Story by Veth Keo, written by Veth with no assistance.

One day my stepmother, she made dessert for everybody in the family. That day I took care of the cows in the fields. I thought about the food, I was hungry. When I get home, I go to the kitchen and my sister was there. I ask her, "This is for me?" She says, "No, they ate it all and forgot about you."

I get very angry and I cry. There was a bowl of dessert, but my sister said, "It's not for you, it's for father." Then I eat the rice and I get full. When my stepmother comes back I ask her, "Why didn't you keep dessert for me?" She says, "Oh yes, I put it there in the bowl for you." But I cannot eat because I ate too much rice before.

ESL exercises using Veth's story:

A. Comprehension Check

1. Who made dessert for everyone in Veth's family?
2. Who took care of the cows?
3. Who was in the kitchen when Veth got home?
4. Why did Veth get angry and cry?
5. Why did her sister tell her the dessert was for their father?
6. How do you think Veth felt after she found out the dessert was for her?

B. Personalize

1. Did you ever take care of animals in your country? Which ones? Do you take care of any here?
2. Do you ever make dessert?
3. Who is always in the kitchen at your house?
4. Do you tease anyone? Who? How often? Why?
5. Do you ever get angry? Why?
6. Has anyone ever teased you? When you were young? Recently?
7. Do your children ever eat something made for you or their father?

C. Comparison

1. Do your children ever get angry with each other
2. What do you do or say to them when they are angry?
3. Do your children ever tease each other?
4. What do you do or say to them when they tease each other?
5. Do your children ever eat anything made especially for you or their father?
6. Do you think it is the same for your children as it was for you as a child?

D. Language Practice

1. Opposites:

There are several opposites in this story. Make the most of this by practising the opposites from the story and expanding the students' repertoire of opposites. Write half of the paired opposites on the BB. Have students write the opposite of the word on the BB.

For example:
everybody - nobody
day - night
hungry - full
sister - brother

2. Grammar:

Possibilities using Veth's story include:

a. Conjunctions
- I cannot eat because I ate too much rice before.

Q. Why doesn't she eat the bowl of dessert when she first sees it?
- She cannot (doesn't) because it is her father's.
- She doesn't because her sister said it was her father's.

Q. Why did she cry?
- She cried because she was angry.

Follow up with personal questions to practice this structure.
1. What do you like to eat? Why do you like it?
2. What don't you like to eat? Why don't you like it?
3. Why do you cry?
4. Pursue other questions using likes/dislikes as a base to practice "I like this because...."

b. Other grammatical points to practice might include the use of always, sometimes, and never.

- My stepmother sometimes made dessert.
- I always took care of the cows.
- My sister was always in the kitchen (when I got home).
- My brother never teased me.
- My sister always teased me (because ....)
- I sometimes get angry.
- I never ate something that was for my father

3. Vocabulary introduction or review

Pick at least one story to work on as a class. Have the student read her story. After reviewing the vocabulary words, read the story together aloud. Have students read with you from their copy or from the BB. What words are new to them? Discuss in pairs, then with the whole group. If some of the vocabulary in the story is new to many of the students, focus on the words and their meanings by having students draw lines from each word to its definition.

Or do a variation of a word search and ask students if they used any of the same vocabulary words in their stories. Have them talk with each other and reads each others stories to find out. Share examples of common vocabulary with the whole group.

4. Make picture and word cards. Or better yet, have students make the cards.

- Play concentration.

- Use for categorization practice (e.g., all words that begin with "b", all verbs, etc.

- Use modified TPR. Have one student be Veth while other students give her directions following (or not following) the story. For example, students might tell the student:

  Take care of the cows. (Student must roleplay taking care of the cows.)
  Go to the kitchen.

Ask your sister if the dessert is for you.
etc.

- Sequencing practice - put the picture cards in the right order and retell the story.

- Provide practice with different ways of saying the same thing.

- Expand the story. "What if ...?" In this example, What if the dessert was for Veth's father and Veth ate it? What would Veth's father say? How would Veth feel?

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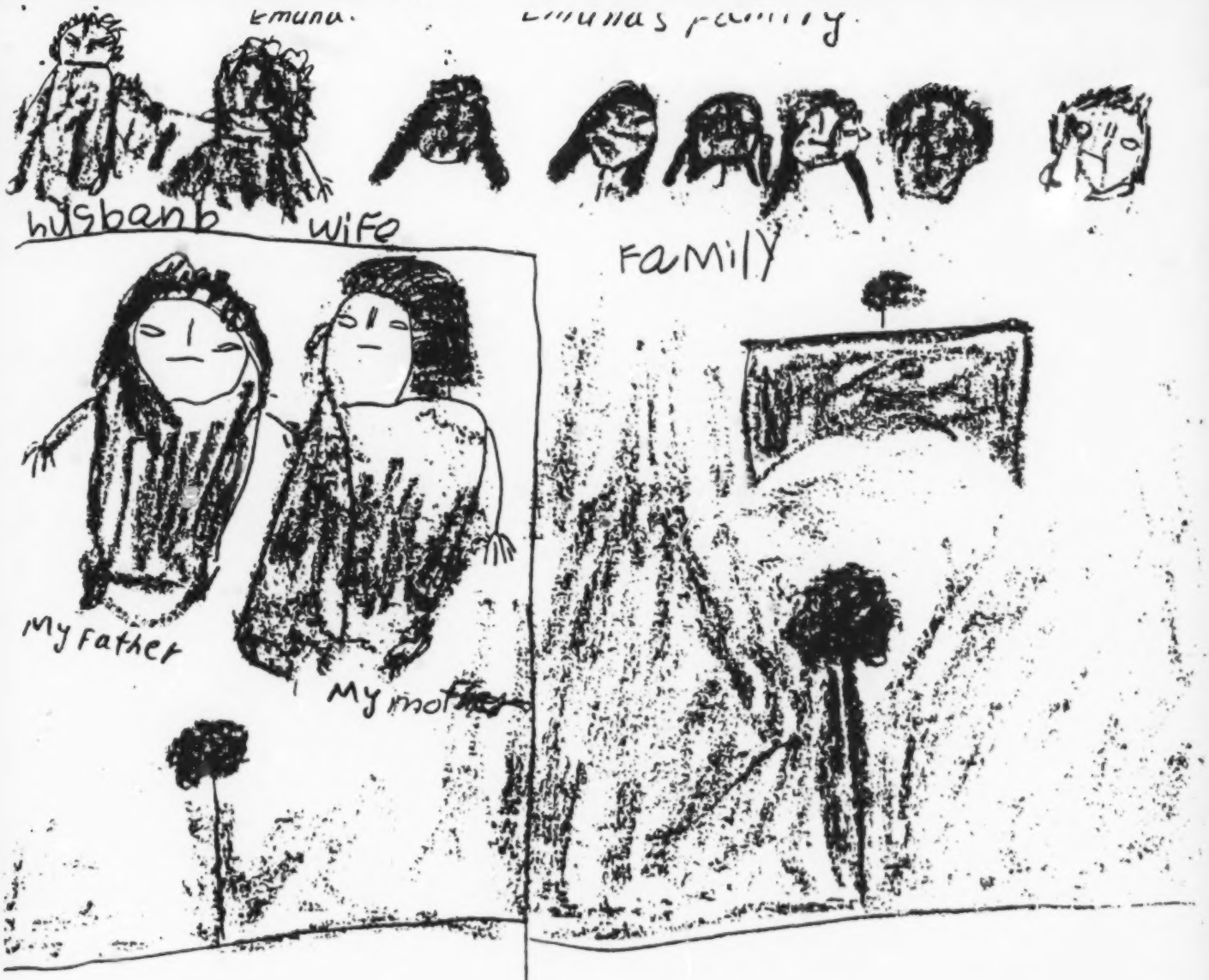
Section V: Conclusion

Two major concerns arose during the project. The first was the expressed need for more ESL activities. Instructors would have liked a longer, more thorough ESL training specific to story collecting at the beginning of the project. It is hoped that the ideas presented in Part IV, ESL Activities, will be a starting point for instructors. While some of the activities were developed during the project, many of them were developed later. In organizations where several instructors are working on a family story project, it is recommended that both a pre-project and post-project workshop be held. As family stories often teach us, we learn from our past experiences.

The second issue is that of how to manage the grief and sadness that often accompanies student memories. Experienced ESL teachers know that such memories surface from time to time, but with family stories, they are even more apt to appear. It has been our experience that students share as much as they are emotionally able to share. ReWA is fortunate to have bilingual aides who can help students discuss their remembrances in their first language if necessary. In organizations without bilingual help, students who are emotionally ready to share memories may be unable to in English. There is no simple answer to this situation. It is one of the struggles of communication in another language. Acknowledgement of the sadness helps. As we all know, tears are the same in any language. The past may bring forth memories of both pain and joy. Providing the environment where all memories can be shared may be the best we can do.



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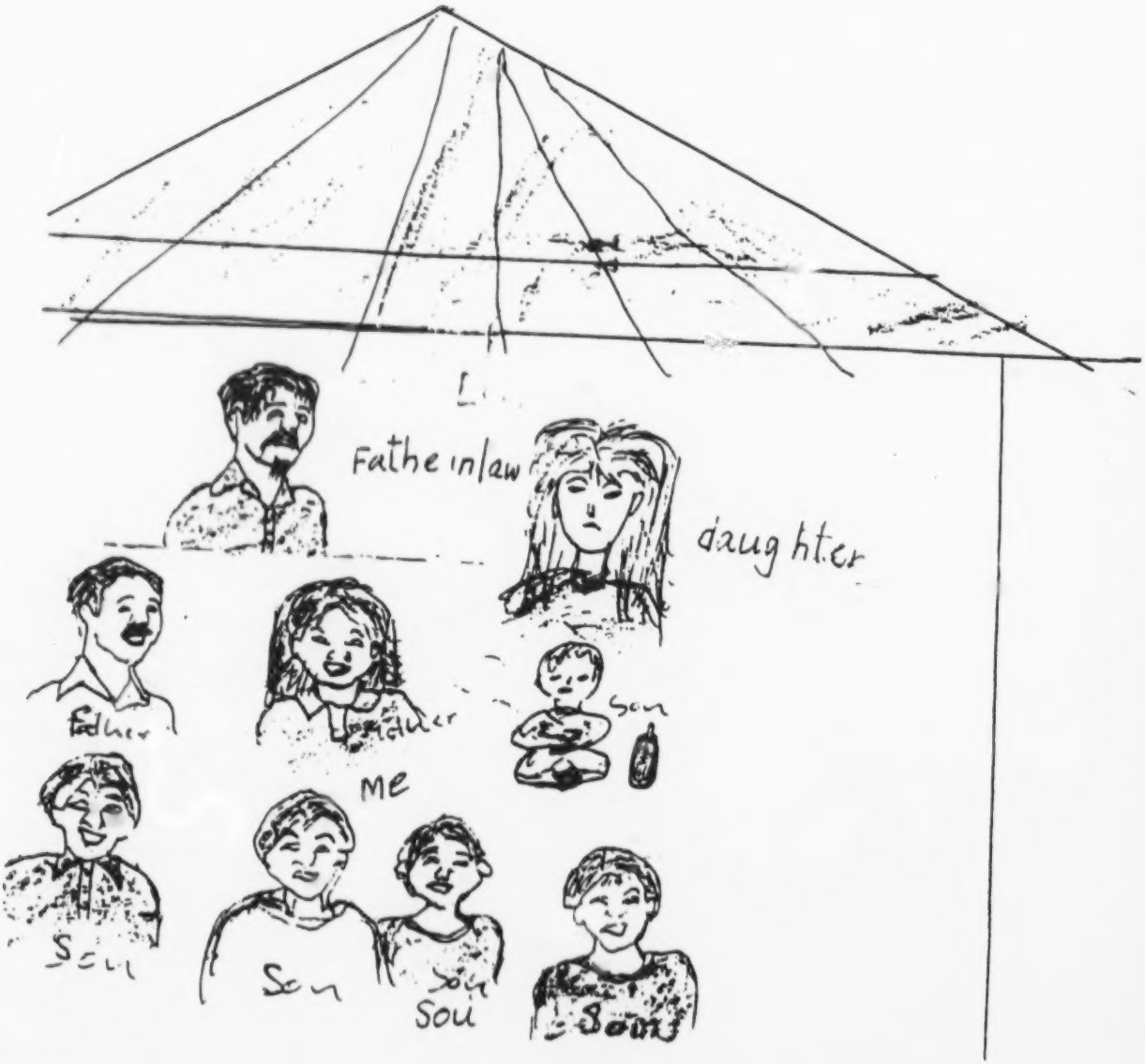
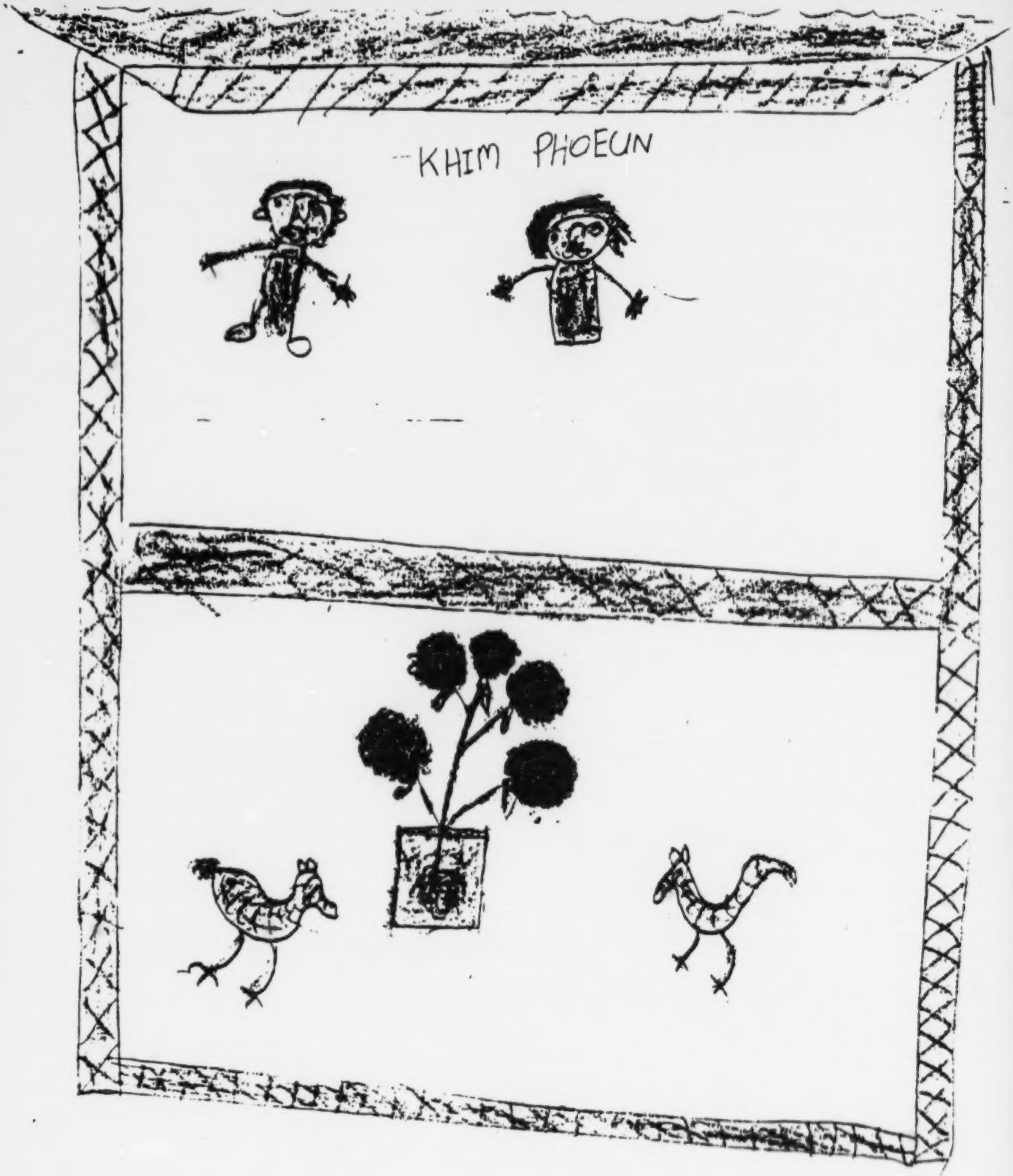
Pre-literate Class Pictures of Families




KHIM PHOEUN

mohmed · hindia my father my mother

Aunt india

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Recommended ESL and Literacy Texts:

Tales from the Homeland: Developing the Language Experience Approach. Anita Molly Bell and Som Dy. Tacoma Community House. A guide for using the language experience approach, using student stories and drawings as examples. The student was a Cambodian refugee woman.

Remembering. Book 1, Book 2, and a Teacher's Guide for both. New Readers Press, Syracuse, NY 1988. Oral histories told by adult students in basic reading classes at the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Literacy exercises follow each story.

In Our Own Words, "From the Shop Floor." Vol.1. Nov. 1988. Metro Labour Education Centre. 954 King St. West, Toronto, Canada. (416)971-5893. Job related stories written by six females and one male in an Adult Basic Education class at the Centre. Comprehension questions follow.

The Far East Comes Near. Autobiographical accounts of Southeast Asian Students in America. Edited by Lucy Nguyen-Hong-Nhiem and Joel Martin Halpern. University of Massachusetts Press. 1989. Very advanced level students. For background information for instructors. Not a text.

Voices Magazine, New Writers for New Readers, Lee Weinstein editor. A magazine of student writing published three times a year by Lower Mainland Society for Literacy and Employment, Surrey, BC. Delta Systems Co. 570 Roack Road Drive, Unit H Dundee, IL 60118-9922.

Language and Culture in Conflict, Nina Wallerstein, Addison and Wesley Publishing Co. Reading Mass, 1983. An excellent book for using student stories in the classroom to promote discussion and problem solving.

The New Arrival: ESL Stories for ESL Students Books 1 and 2, Laurie Kuntz, Allemany Press, San Francisco, CA 1982. Short personal stories about a Lao refugee. Exercises included.

Personal Stories, A Book for Adults who are beginning to read. Book 1 and 2 Koch, Mrowicki, Ruttenberg, Linmore Press, PO Box 1545 Palatine, IL 600078. Personal stories of immigrants with exercises.

Goodbye, Lovely Land: An Anthology of Stories by and for Adults Learning English. Edited by Lois Rosen, Chemeketa Community College, Salem Or. Lots of stories and activities for all levels of learners.

Students stories: A series of readers developed by the ESL students, International Catholic Migration Commission, Philippines Refugee Processing Centre, Morong, Bataan, Philippines. An excellent set of readers for beginning ESL students.

Recommended Oral History Collection Texts:

Oral History for the Local Historical Societies, Willa Baum, Nashville: Association for State and Local history, 1977.

Transcribing and Editing Oral History, Willa Baum, Nashville: Association for State and Local history 1974.

Aural / Oral History and Ethnic Communities, William Langlois, 1981.

Record and Remember: Tracing Your Roots through Oral History, Ellen Robinson Esptein and Rona Mendelsohn, 1978.

An Oral History Primer, Gary Shumway and William G Hartley, 1974.

Using Oral History for a Family History Project, Linda Shopes, Technical Leaflet 123, History News 35, 1 (Jan 1980)